

**Charnel Mulligan Park Renovation**  
**Public Feedback outside of the Web Survey**  
2/11/13

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**Sent:** Sunday, November 25, 2012 5:21 PM  
**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S  
**Subject:** Feedback on proposed renovation

Dear Mr. Richardson --

I got a card in the mail yesterday inviting me to a neighborhood workshop (#1) to discuss proposed renovations at Charnel Mulligan Park. It said to go to [www.eugene-or.gov/charnelmulligan](http://www.eugene-or.gov/charnelmulligan) to give feedback online. The link didn't work, so I'm sending you an e-mail instead.

My only complaint these past years about C-M is that the sheltered picnic area attracts homeless or apparently homeless people, making the park less desirable than it would otherwise be. I used to take my grandkids there when they were small, and would sometimes feel uncomfortable about the folks near us as we played in the sand. So, my proposal for a renovation would be to either remove the roof or have a mechanized roof that one could get a permit to operate.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

(my grandkids lived on Lincoln near the park, and are now a block away on Lawrence; I used to live on Lawrence near 13th)

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**Voicemail** Sat. Dec 1, 2:00pm

Caller expressed an interest in some kind of food production in the park based on a permaculture model. As an example in a public park, he mentioned the Beacon Hill Food Forest in Seattle WA.

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**Sent:** Saturday, December 01, 2012 1:19 PM  
**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S  
**Subject:** Charnel Mulligan Park Renovation

Hello Phillip,

I live at <on> Charnelton Street, one block from Charnel-Mulligan Park. I pass by the park almost every day and I welcome the news that some improvements may be made. I know that a few of my neighbors have been working on a proposal for possible changes at the park and I have received a copy of their proposals.

While I salute their public-spirited endeavors, I am strongly opposed to some of these proposals. None of the “problems” described justify these draconian measures. Most troubling are proposals to fence-off or otherwise deny access to the park. The committee’s intent, apparently, is to impose their own behavioral requirements on other citizens and to essentially close the park if their own sensibilities are not conformed to.

Our public policies must not be determined by tiny minorities seeking to deny public benefits to some of their fellow citizens.

Thank you,

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**Sent:** Sunday, December 02, 2012 5:59 PM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Charnel Mulligan Park Renovation

Hello, Philip,

I live in the Mulligan Park neighborhood and can’t make the meeting the 4<sup>th</sup>. However I have a suggestion for one way to use a portion of the park:

Put in a Petanque Court. It would not be expensive, courts vary a lot in France, but one needs only a flat area, covered in a fine gravel. It would need to have a low fence to keep dogs out.

Petanque is a sport for all ages and is lots of fun. My husband and I would like to be able to play somewhere with our friends.

Thanks,

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**Sent:** Tuesday, December 04, 2012 9:32 PM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Charnel Mulligan Park

Hello,

I attended the meeting regarding Charnel Mulligan Park and I'm so pleased that something could be in the works! I've lived in the neighborhood (17th between Lincoln & Lawrence) for almost 30 years. I would pass the park practically every day when I walked to work. Now that I'm retired, I still pass the park on my daily errands, etc. I don't stop and use the park because of the issues around it which were discussed. Once in a while, I'll see some families use the play area.

Sometimes, I think people might even use the shelter for a gathering but rarely. It is not a particularly attractive park as it is now. But the potential is certainly there to make it into a viable, living park.

I am one of the people that would like to see the shelter taken down. It attracts a population of undesirable people as you know. I am encouraged that so many neighbors are interested in helping to make the neighborhood an attractive one. I hope the funding comes through and we can have a nice place in the neighborhood where people can feel safe using their neighborhood park.

Thanks,

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**Sent:** Wednesday, December 05, 2012 8:45 AM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Charnel Mulligan Park rejuvenation

Hi Philip,

I submitted a survey. Here are some additional/expanded suggestions ...

\* POS really needs to provide some basic education for interested community members. For starters, you need to post a well-selected, categorized list of resources with a short blurb that describes what the resource provides. Here's an example:

NatureGrounds website -- Provides best practice guidelines for creating and retrofitting play environments for parks and school grounds that integrate manufactured play equipment and the living landscape.

You need to have an on-line blog, a way to submit questions and an FAQ that posts submitted questions and responses. Here's an example of a question:

Are there examples of parks like Charnel Mulligan that have a shelter and manage to avoid it becoming a hangout for transients?

A solid answer to this question would really help avoid uninformed "battles" over the shelter. Ditto with other issues.

\* Context map(s) need to show significant residential development (The Tate, Capstone, Lincoln Towers, Willamette Towers), major streets, major land use categories (residential, commercial), etc. Here's a pretty "primitive" version of how you can add info to a map with links to see more detail ...

<http://jwneugene.org/densitygallerymap.html>

<http://jwneugene.org/densitygallery.html>

The point of the above suggestions is that you have to help educate (not indoctrinate) community participants before you start asking for preferences. Otherwise, you're almost certain to get people "taking sides" with most of them (on any side), not really being adequately informed of the evidence supporting or contradicting their intuition.

\* This project's work product must address, at least at some level, all the elements necessary to achieve the goals. This will include: physical design, police involvement, programs (City and independent),

volunteer support, etc. It is this work product that you want to present to the JWN and (if the job has been done well), get a resounding vote of support.

\* You need a "resident advisory committee" to work closely with. At least a majority of the members should be appointed by the JWN board. Staff and others could, of course, recommend members; and I would expect the JWN board to be supportive. This element will not only help you produce a better work product, it will help you get neighborhood support for the final proposal. (I've cc'd Rene Kane in Neighborhood Services. Rene is also a JWN member and lives close to the park, You should get Rene's advice on how to best gain the benefits of working closely with the JWN board.)

\* Specific feature: Need to add free wifi to the park (no matter how it's otherwise configured). Everyone -- but especially youth -- now wants to stay "connected" wherever they go.

\* Keep in mind my serious offer of \$1,000 contribution and fund-raising for \$20,000 for ten years organizational support of a (mostly) student volunteer group to support JWN parks.

I'll send more thoughts as they occur.

Feel free to call or e-mail for further discussions.

Thanks!

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**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2012 10:26 AM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Park notes

Good morning Philip!

I am leaving town today and won't be back until next Tuesday. I will not have time to fill out the web survey beforehand, but I would like to share a couple of brief thoughts today so that you have more time to digest them, knowing that you will be out of town yourself for 3 weeks starting on the 15th. I will elaborate with more detail via the web survey after I return.

... I agree with Paul's comments about the process for generating the best plan for changes to Charnel Mulligan Park. I am worried about the condensed timeline, but only because I want to ensure that we come up with the best result possible. To do anything less would be to squander a once in several decades opportunity. It is somewhat ironic that I had to soothe the feelings of most of our working group about the slow pace of our work and the City's responses to us, explaining that slow is better if it results in the long-range goals being implemented, and then suddenly the City is in the driver's seat and we are jetting forward at a fast clip. This comment is in no way meant as a criticism of you or Parks and Open Space staff, as you and Neil have been wonderful to work with, it is just a note of caution and

concern about the prospect of moving along too fast at the expense of due process and thorough consideration of all elements necessary for a great result. I think my message in this paragraph is just that I think that folks are going to want and expect a great result.

On that note, I wholeheartedly believe that if the changes to the park do not solve the problems of illegal and disrespectful behavior that keep others from feeling comfortable in using the park, then I think the effort will be judged a failure. To me, it is not all that important what the specific details are, so long as they address the primary problems. I fear that it is a very real possibility that lots of money will be spent and some nice changes will occur, but use patterns of the park will remain unchanged because we didn't effectively address the root problems.

I have a few specific ideas for you to digest before I get to filling out the web survey next week. The first idea is outside the box, but I think it is important to consider all ideas. Here are some of my thoughts:

1. Develop the park property as a thoughtfully and tastefully designed co-housing complex. This would increase density and solve the problems on that property. To preserve open space, the complex could include a central park-like area, perhaps with a very simple play area and some grass, to be open to the neighborhood.

An alternative would be to use the proceeds from the co-housing development to buy one or both lots that front the entirety of the north side of the block on 15th Avenue between Lincoln and Lawrence for development of a smaller and very simple park that would have its entire frontage on the street (i.e. no back way to enter).

Either way, the current park property would no longer be used for illegal activity, and the neighborhood would retain park area, just smaller than now. As you have noted, this neighborhood is already well-served by parks.

2. Barring the above, absolutely get rid of the covered shelter. Dennis Casaday recently moved a house from the campus area to the southeast corner of Charnelton and 17th, kitty corner from the park. He has offered to move the shelter for his own use as a garage. I am not clear on where he would move it, but if he means to the 17th and Charnelton property, then the shelter would remain in use within view of the park. No matter what is done with it, however, I don't believe there is any realistic way to keep the shelter and not have it continue to be a problem and/or a contentious issue.

In spite of our working group's efforts to find a middle ground on this topic, my strong personal belief is that it has to go in order for this effort to succeed. It is not the only problem spot in the park, so removing it alone will not solve all the problems, but it is the single biggest problem area, and more importantly, it is the magnet that draws folks to the park for the wrong reasons.

I know that this could be a somewhat contentious issue, but I am certain that a majority of residents would support its removal. Beyond public opinion, I believe that it is incumbent upon POS staff to make the right decision for the health of the park and the broader neighborhood. As you said yourself at the Tuesday meeting, this is not going to be a democratic process whereby we vote on changes. You have the responsibility (and I don't envy you this role) of making the best long-term decisions, regardless of the sentiments in the moment.

3. I think that you should proceed with park re-design as if you are creating a park from scratch, at least initially. You can later take into consideration current features, but I think that this park needs to be completely re-thought. Paul Conte sent me information from websites he found that deal with park design for urban areas that specifically address the kinds of problems we encounter. Gathering as much outside expertise in formulating a plan is essential in this case. We don't have to re-invent the wheel here.

I think that no matter what, improving visibility is key, as is eradicating areas that allow folks to be "out of the way" to do illegal things. So, the earthen berms will likely need to go, for example. The back entry to the park might need to be closed, as well, but a potential solution to that problem area might be to put the new playground in that northwest corner of the park, so that the access point in that corner is into the main gathering area of the park.

4. There was good feedback shared at the meeting about understanding the demographics of the immediate neighborhood so that money will be spent on improvements that will actually be used. This was an excellent point that I hadn't considered until then. I know that there will be support for a new play area, but perhaps that is not really what will foster increased positive use of the park. I think it will, but I don't know for sure.

5. I had a chance to visit Milton Park, and had a re-look at Frank Kinney Park. I really like Milton Park's design. It is simple, creates a feeling of spaciousness with its open area, but has enough amenities to be appealing to lots of folks. The play area is simple, but has enough elements (esp. the slide and swings) to appeal to kids, particularly the sand area and simple water feature. I also really like the simple, smallish single basketball hoop and lines. I know that this would get used, just look at any other park with the same. Charnel Mulligan could also have two hoops like Washington Park, facilitating full-court games, but I suspect a simpler set-up would suffice. I know that myself and my kids, and Michael Warren and his son, and several other kids near our house would be up there all the time using the hoop.

I am sure that there might be things to dislike about basketball hoops, such as (perhaps) the sound of bouncing balls or boisterous voices, but they certainly do attract positive users to parks. I have never, ever in my entire life in this town seen a basketball hoop area at a park draw the wrong element or facilitate illegal activity (with the exception of maybe Washington-Jefferson Park beneath the freeway

bridge, which is all about location), so this would definitely draw in healthy uses and lots of kids (who would tend to be a little older, balancing the younger kids draw of the playground).

I like the simple set-up at Milton Park, but think that the water feature could be a little more interesting, like Frank Kinney Park's water feature, or even a something like the water feature at Friendly Park (which, by the way, we know was a contentious issue as changes were planned, because one of our friends was involved in that effort, but our family absolutely loves the changes made there, and we know from experience that it is a well-loved park).

I really do believe that the playground redesign doesn't need to be elaborate; in fact, I think that simple is better. But a simple water feature would be a great addition, striking a balance between offering a truly attractive feature to draw in families and kids, but not attracting too many people from outside the catchment area.

I also like Milton and Kinney Parks' climbing features on their respective play structures. Kids love these. Kinney Park also has the circular balancing feature that kids also love. I am not sure what they are called, but kids stand on them and try to keep their balance as the thing slowly starts to rotate.

I also really liked the simple art features at both parks, especially at Milton. I am specifically referring to the decorative tiles laid into the hardscape walkways. Very nice addition!

Well, Philip, this turned out to be longer than I intended. Hopefully, it gives you some good stuff to chew on in the interim. I will fill out the web survey next week, and give you all of my thoughts. Have a great weekend!

Respectfully,

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**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2012 10:58 AM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Charnel Mulligan Park

Philip – cool article in the RG the other day regarding Charnel Mulligan Park. It's sad that the facility is being misused. The initial design was pretty cool for its day – 1982-84 or so. You probably already have this on you list of things to do, but if not, and if you're looking for any outside assistance, you might consider reaching out to Cameron McCarthy. Ron Cameron and Brian McCarthy (Cameron & Associates at the time) were the principal landscape architects on the project. Brian is, sadly, gone and Ron is retired, but their firm may still have the original survey, drawings, specs, etc.

From 1980 through 1985, Ron was a sole proprietor. That being in the depths of the 1980s recession, there wasn't much work for landscape architects in private practice in Eugene. By 1982 Ron was the only office in town. Brian McCarthy and I were his only employees. Ron was (and still is) a sharp guy.

He ran the business while Brian was primarily responsible for Programming, Schematic Design and Master Planning and I managed Design Development through CA.

Nonetheless, Charnel Mulligan Park was a fun project for us. It was one of the only “100% sand with washboard subsurface drainage” turf fields in town at the time. We worked closely with the neighborhood. The basalt walls, picnic shelter, play area, site furniture and landscaped edges along the alley and north property line were largely a result of neighbor input. I recall one afternoon in particular during construction – being in an older neighborhood, we specified that pigment be added to the concrete and rock salt be floated into the surface. All so that it would be slightly gray, look pockmarked and match the existing concrete along the sidewalk. The contractor provided several samples. In one sample he goofed and the sample was the color of re-cycled chili beans. Made us laugh.

Anyway, just thought I’d mention Cameron and McCarthy’s role in the project.

Sincerely,

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**Sent:** Saturday, December 08, 2012 9:51 AM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Lifting ban on camping in City parks

Hello all,

I saw in this morning’s Register-Guard that there is a push to lift the existing ban on camping and fires in City parks and that the City Council will discuss homeless issues Monday evening.

There may or may not be a case for establishing a program by which individuals can camp and cook in a City park, such as Alton Baker, under supervision in a way that would not impact residents in the area.

However, it would be a potential disaster to loosen any regulations that would apply to Charnel Mulligan, Monroe, and other parks within JWN. The argument that "they camp in the bushes anyway" is specious because removing the ability to enforce a sensible rule just makes it harder to address problems in our parks and to craft constructive solutions for both the health of our parks and neighborhoods, as well as to help the homeless.

I would also be a bad idea to loosen restrictions in Westmorland Park, which is just across W. 18th Ave. from the JWN.

Thanks!

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**Sent:** Saturday, December 15, 2012 3:14 PM  
**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S; PROUDFOOT Emily A  
**Subject:** Charnel Mulligan Park

Philip & Emily,

I just reviewed the notes from your first meeting on Mulligan Park.

I think the food cart (s) idea is a great one. It could be done at minimal expense, and it might make a significant change in the makeup and behavior of park users.

I think removal or closure of the shelter would ruin the character of the park. That is the heart of the park.

If it is removed, there will be no "there" there, and if it is closed in some way it will send a "you are not welcome" message.

We do not have many parks in town where people can take a picnic in the spring or fall when it is likely to rain. The shelter at Mulligan serves a number of functional and aesthetic needs.

Please give strong consideration to the food cart idea, and please test it and other ideas before destroying this valuable asset.

Sincerely,

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**Sent:** Monday, January 07, 2013 1:37 PM  
**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S  
**Subject:** charnel-mulligan park input

Hi Philip

Below are some images from Murase Park in Wilsonville. Obviously, Murase Park is on a whole different scale than Charnel-Mulligan, but I like these particular structures and features; they provide a creative, artistic approach to play while still having their own inherent beauty.

We appreciate your efforts on this park. You did a great job running that first meeting--thanks!





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Sent: Monday, January 07, 2013 5:26 PM

To: RICHARDSON Philip S

Subject: Re: Charnel Mulligan Park Renovation Project Update

Hi Philip,

Happy New Year! I hope that you and your family had a wonderful visit back east, and that your travels went smoothly.

Moving on to business, I tried to access my survey to add comments, but couldn't make it happen, so I will comment here. Sorry if this makes it harder for you to collate.

I have had the opportunity to visit more parks over the last several weeks, with an eye toward noticing what works, what doesn't, what trends there seem to be for parks with similar purposes. This research has engendered more contemplation about Charnel Mulligan Park and its needs. As a result, I feel compelled to comment again on one aspect of the park, the covered shelter.

My visits to other neighborhood parks made it apparent that the covered shelter at Charnel Mulligan is NOT a standard feature at such parks. It is more common at larger parks, but unusual at the smaller neighborhood parks. This is curious to me, and leaves me wondering why Charnel Mulligan Park was designed with a shelter in the first place? It is not the norm for such parks, and very obviously doesn't work in this case for many reasons, not the least of which is that it both draws folks from a broader area than intended (beyond the designated half-mile radius), and draws the wrong folks for use patterns unforeseen and unintended.

A second point regarding the shelter is about how it is NOT used. I can only surmise that the original intent was for various people to use the shelter for picnics, gatherings of friends, birthday parties, etc. In other words, to accommodate groups of people who want to use it positively. Even without consideration of the fact that the shelter is mostly used inappropriately, it is rarely used for what must have been its intended purpose. I grant that the predominance of negative usage probably discourages positive usage, but 11 years ago when we first moved to the area, the negative usage was much less than it is now, yet positive usage still seemed miniscule.

My analysis is that even if we could wave a magic wand and eliminate negative usage altogether, I am fairly certain that positive usage would still be limited. I believe that this is because it is the wrong type of park for such a structure. It makes more sense at a park like Washington Park that is designed to draw from a larger area, or more likely a regional park like Hendricks Park or Skinner Butte Park.

So, in short, I believe that the shelter should never have been built for Charnel Mulligan Park, because it is a design element that is inappropriate for the park's size and intended purpose.

We can't undo mistakes from the past, but we can work to avoid repeating the past's mistakes in the present. It is unfortunate in this case that the past mistake has resulted in emotional attachment to the structure on the part of some residents, an attachment that would not exist if the park never had a covered shelter in the first place. I hope that you will keep this in mind when making renovation decisions, and that you will not let sentimentality on the part of a few neighbors override pragmatism and common sense.

On a scheduling note, this morning a friend forwarded an announcement regarding the next meeting on February 12th. I have not seen this in my mail yet, and would love to hear what you have cooking at this point.

Oh, and one other piece of information to pass along to you is that the JWN Executive Board passed a motion designating me as the official liaison between the board and the City with regard to Mulligan Park improvements. I am not sure what this means in reality at this point, but I just wanted to let you know. I imagine that at some point in the future, when plans have become more solidified, there might be some back and forth between City staff and our board, in which case I will be involved. At this point in time, as I am sure is evident to you, I am only speaking for myself.

Thanks, again, for your work on behalf of our neighborhood park. I appreciate all that you are doing, and wish you the best in your preliminary design process. Let me know if I can help in any way. Take care!

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1/8/13

Phillip Richardson  
Eugene Parks and Open Space

1820 Roosevelt Blvd  
Eugene, OR 97405

Hello Phillip,

It appears to me that the planning process for updating Charnel-Mulligan Park is proceeding under false pretenses. Although "safety" is identified as the main problem for the park, no actual safety problems in the park have been identified. No record of police calls to the park has been presented. No one in the neighborhood has reported being harassed or assaulted in the park. There has been no suggestion of any property crimes linked to park users. Other than the probability of some drug use, no accusation of criminal behavior in the park has been made.

Some users of the park are from outside the neighborhood. Some of these are homeless people killing time and using the park shelter. Some, no doubt, are users of illegal drugs. Lately the park is being visited by some of the youth who frequent the downtown mall. Like most kids their age, they can be boisterous. Some neighbors of the park notice these folks and feel fear. But there is no evidence that these fears are justified.

Paranoia is not just a psychosis found in mental institutions; it is an everyday phenomenon in human relations. Most of us have sometimes struggled to see the humanity of another person or group rather than to assume the worst. The most fundamental cause of human prejudice and violence is fear and hatred of others whose sameness to us we don't allow ourselves to see.

I see this most serious of all human failings in this planning process. Will we spend all this time and money, and degrade this park as a public space, to solve a "problem" that doesn't exist? It looks like we are going to end up with a failure of tolerance for human diversity, and public sanction for our willingness to believe the worst about another group of our fellow citizens.

Thank you,

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**Sent:** Tuesday, January 15, 2013 10:40 AM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Charnelton Mulligan park

Just an idea. Bocce courts. Horseshoes. Thanks and hope you're having a good day.

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**Sent:** Tuesday, January 15, 2013 1:53 PM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** charnel mulligan park

Hi Philip...

I know it is past the deadline, but I wanted to suggest one more thing...

I think the park would be a great place to have a "little free library" as pictured on this website:  
<http://www.littlefreelibrary.org/>

If it comes to fruition, I (and I'm sure many neighbors) would be willing to manage its upkeep.

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**Sent:** Friday, January 18, 2013 6:20 AM

**To:** RICHARDSON Philip S

**Subject:** Re: Two days left for Charnel Mulligan Park survey!

Philip,

I was unable to complete a survey as our home computer crashed.

My two cents...

If there is a way to make the shelter safe (not a draw for people intending to do the wrong thing) then it would be nice to keep it. If safety is not achievable -remove the structure as a family safe park is my ultimate hope!

Remove areas for people to hide out...again safety from folks doing the wrong things.

My family enjoys the large open space for Frisbee like activities.

Thank you for considering all of our needs.

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**Phone call** February 8, 3:00 p.m.

Long time neighbor of park who said transients are constantly looking into her backyard from the alley, and throwing debris over her fence. She was very tired of having to deal with needles and inappropriate activities just outside her fence in the alley. Asked that whatever is done would address this issue.

Would like the seating wall and stones removed as soon as possible. Her and several other neighbors have alley access into their back yards through a legal agreement with the City.